

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, MASS, RP

SUBJECT: HUMPHREY SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

THE HUMPHREY SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE OF THE
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL HOLD HEARINGS
ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE MARCH 4 (PUBLIC
TESTIMONY) AND 7. DEPUTY SECRETARY WARREN CHRISTOPHER
WILL TESTIFY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AT 11:00 A.M. MONDAY,
MARCH 7 ACCOMPANIED BY PATT DERIAN AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARIES FROM EACH OF THE REGIONAL BUREAUS. AFTER
PRESENTING HIS GENERAL STATEMENT ON U.S. POLICY ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY IS
EXPECTED TO BE ASKED QUESTIONS ON A VARIETY OF SPECIFIC
HUMAN RIGHTS SUBJECTS. THE FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE
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HAS BEEN PREPARED IN CASE THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN THE PHILIPPINES ARISES. THIS GUIDANCE HAS BEEN VERY
CAREFULLY REVIEWED WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND REFLECTS
THE ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS WELL AS OVERALL
U.S. INTERESTS:

QUOTE IN LATE 1976, THE DEPARTMENT SUBMITTED A SECTION

502B(C) REPORT TO THE CONGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS
IN THE PHILIPPINES.

QUOTE -- MOST FILIPINOS DO ENJOY CIVIL RIGHTS, BUT THE
NATURE OF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION PROCLAIMED IN
1972 IS SUCH THAT ANY OF THESE RIGHTS CAN BE ABRIDGED.
THE GOP HAS SUSPENDED HABEAS CORPUS AND DETAINED PERSONS
FOR POLITICAL AND SECURITY REASONS, IN SOME CASES FOR UP
TO FOUR YEARS, WITHOUT TRIAL OR CHARGE. A SENIOR GOP
OFFICIAL STATED IN FEBRUARY THAT 1,441 PERSONS WERE BEING
HELD FOR "CRIMES AGAINST NATIONAL SECURITY", OF WHOM 735
HAD NOT YET BEEN CHARGED. TRIALS FOR SOME PERSONS HAVE
RECENTLY BEGUN BUT IT IS UNCLEAR HOW FAR THIS FAVORABLE
TREND WILL CARRY.

QUOTE -- RECENT GOP ACTIONS HAVE INCLUDED DEPORTATION OF
A FEW FOREIGN MISSIONARIES AND FOREIGN NEWSMEN (INCLUDING
AMERICAN CITIZENS), CLOSURE OF CHURCH RADIO STATIONS AND
PUBLICATIONS, AND SELECTIVE ARRESTS OF CHURCH SOCIAL
WORKERS -- ALL ON GROUNDS OF PROVOKING INTERNAL DISORDERS.

QUOTE -- WE HAVE EXPRESSED TO THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT
OUR CONCERN OVER SEVERAL SPECIFIC CASES INVOLVING
AMERICAN CITIZENS, AS WELL AS ON THE MORE GENERAL ISSUES.

QUOTE -- WE STRONGLY DEPLORE ACTIONS OF THIS NATURE,
PARTICULARLY ON THE PART OF A COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE HAVE
HAD SUCH LONG AND CLOSE RELATIONS. OUR CONCERNS HAVE
BEEN COMMUNICATED TO THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, ALONG
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WITH OUR POSITION THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT.
THE FACT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT SECURITY
ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AT THE PRESENT LEVEL
CANNOT BE MISCONSTRUED BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AS
TACIT ACQUIESCENCE IN THE RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON FREEDOM
OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND EXPRESSION.

QUOTE -- THE ADMINISTRATION DOES BELIEVE THAT OVERALL U.S.
INTERESTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA GENERALLY AND THE PHILIPPINES
IN PARTICULAR CALL FOR CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE
PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
PHILIPPINES AS A STRATEGIC BALANCE FOR PEACE AND STABILITY
OF THE REGION HAS LONG BEEN A CARDINAL PRINCIPLE, NOT ONLY
FOR THE U.S. BUT ALSO FOR OUR FRIENDS IN THE AREA. THIS
CONTINUES TO BE TRUE IN THE NEW SITUATION WHICH PREVAILS
FOLLOWING REDUCTION OF DIRECT U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT
IN THE AREA, WITH AN INCREASED BURDEN PLACED UPON THE
ABILITY OF OUR FRIENDS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES INDIVIDUALLY
AND COLLECTIVELY.

QUOTE -- THE ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO WORK
WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES TO ACHIEVE AN
IMPROVEMENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THERE, JUST AS

IT INTENDS TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH THAT GOVERNMENT ON
MUTUAL SECURITY INTERESTS. END QUOTE.

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